

SCAG Future Leaders Initiative Charter

Overview

The Future Leaders Initiative offers a six-month civic leadership program to a cohort of individuals interested in understanding how regional and local governments collaborate for long-term change. Through the Future Leaders Initiative, alongside the long-range vision of the Connect SoCal Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, SCAG strives to empower emerging leaders through training and professional development that foster a deeper understanding of planning principles and the impact of planning on the present and future of Southern California. By creating accessible avenues for young adults to deepen their knowledge of planning principles, best practices, and opportunities for direct engagement with local and elected leaders, SCAG seeks to create a more accessible and inclusive field of civic leaders, planning professionals, and local voices shaping the SCAG region.

The Future Leaders Initiative cohort will participate in six sessions over six months. The first session and the concluding session will be held in-person at SCAG's Downtown Los Angeles office; the remaining four sessions will be held online. This hybrid format gives participants opportunities to build connections in-person while maintaining the flexibility and accessibility of online learning throughout the program, especially given the geographic representation of participants from across the region.

Curriculum may include the following topics:

- Understanding Planning and Why it Matters
- Real World Examples of Planning Intersections – Housing, Transportation, and Sustainability
- SCAG and Connect SoCal: Planning at the Regional Level
- Policy Development and Coalition Building
- From Planning to Implementation – Making Change on the Ground
- Future Leaders Voices in Planning and Civic Leadership

Goals

The goals of the Future Leaders Initiative are to:

- Engage and educate participants on planning principles, using Connect SoCal as a guide to understand the intersections of transportation, land use, housing, sustainability, and other regional planning topics.
- Provide opportunities for participants to develop civic leadership skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and advocacy, and expand their professional networks.
- Foster collaboration and partnerships with other organizations, community groups, government agencies, businesses, and stakeholders to maximize resources, leverage expertise, and amplify impact by partnering with schools for recruitment and inviting partners to speak during trainings.
- Encourage further understanding of the region for SCAG staff while increasing the agency's visibility.
- Create an accessible, equitable pipeline into the planning field and amplify the power of community-led planning strategies.

Membership

The program cohort will consist of selected residents in the SCAG region, representing each county. Participants in the Future Leaders Initiative must be at least 18 years of age upon commencement of the program. The program is designed for individuals in early careers, reflecting the curriculum's complexity and intended learning outcomes. The cohort shall consist of no more than 30 members.

Applicants must submit a completed application by the specified deadline. The application may request details about personal background, interests, experiences, and motivations for joining the Future Leaders Initiative. Selection will prioritize geographic representation. Selection will be based on factors including, but not limited to, demonstrated interest in community leadership and civic engagement, ability to work collaboratively in a team environment, background, experience, and potential for positive contributions to the program's goals.

All selected participants must sign and submit a participation agreement prior to the start of the training to be eligible.

Compensation

Cohort participants will be eligible for a \$500 stipend at the completion of the program. Travel expenses incurred by participants for any in-person meetings will be reimbursed subject to SCAG's Travel and Business Meal Expense Policy.

Meetings

The cohort will primarily meet online, with the opportunity to meet in person at SCAG's downtown Los Angeles office for the first and final sessions. Participants are required to actively participate in specified meetings, events, and projects throughout the term. For virtual meetings, participants are encouraged to be present on camera and fully engage in discussions and activities to foster meaningful collaboration and relationship building.

Throughout the program, participants will have opportunities to attend SCAG-hosted workshops, field trips, and site tours. Future Leaders Initiative participants are encouraged to participate in these experiences. Attendance at SCAG-hosted workshops will count toward meeting the program completion requirements.

Stipend Requirements

SCAG will issue stipends upon completion of the program. All participants are required to submit a W-9 form at the start of the program. After payments are made to participants, SCAG will issue a Form 1099.

Software, Internet, and Device Requirements

Virtual meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams and/or Zoom. Participants **do not** need a Teams license to join meetings.

Internet Requirements

- Participants must provide their own internet service from a reputable provider.
- Minimum speeds: 10 Mbps download / 1 Mbps upload.

- Acceptable connection types: DSL, cable, fiber-optic, satellite, or 5G home internet.
- Hotspots and mobile phone tethering are not acceptable, even if they meet speed requirements.